

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 161616
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T STATE 161616

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMMAN 05490 ACTION SECSTATE DATED JUNE 21, 1978.

QUOTE: S E C R E T AMMAN 05490

NODIS

FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1/2

TAGS: PGOV, PDIP, IS, EG, JO, XF

SUBJECT: APPROACH TO KING HUSSEIN

REF: STATE 157029

1. REFTEL ARRIVED TOO LATE FOR ME TO SEE KING HUSSEIN
BUT I WAS ABLE TO CONVEY TALKING POINTS TO SHARAF AT
AIRPORT AT 9 A.M., JUNE 21, ONLY MINUTES BEFORE KING
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HUSSEIN'S DEPARTURE. SHARAF SAID HE WOULD MAKE CERTAIN
TO CONVEY POINTS TO KING HUSSEIN AND DISCUSS ISSUE AS
FULLY AS LIMITED TIME PERMITTED.

2. AFTER READING TALKING POINTS, SHARAF SAID HE UNDER-
STOOD OUR ESSENTIAL POINT URGING RESTRAINT AND PATIENCE
ON JORDAN AT THIS SENSITIVE TIME. WITHOUT MAKING A

PRECISE COMMITMENT, SHARAF IMPLIED THAT HE BELIEVES JORDAN IS EXERCISING AND WILL CONTINUE TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT. AS EVIDENCE, HE SAID THAT GOJ STATEMENT OF REACTION TO ISRAELI REPLY TO U.S. QUESTIONS HAD BEEN RELATIVELY RESTRAINED. KING WAS EXTREMELY UPSET WITH ISRAELI RESPONSE AND HAD FIRST THOUGHT OF ISSUING COMMENT HIMSELF, BUT HAD DECIDED TO HAVE ONLY MINISTER OF INFORMATION DO SO. (COMMENT: MININFO'S COMMENT IN OUR JUDGMENT DOES APPEAR RELATIVELY RESTRAINED, PARTICULARLY IN MENTIONING ISRAELI STATEMENT WAS EMBARRASSMENT TO "ALL WHO DESIRE AND ARE ABLE TO CONTINUE PEACE EFFORTS." END COMMENT)

3. SHARAF SAID THAT GOJ WILL PROBABLY STILL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO COMMENT SOMEWHAT ON NEGATIVE ISRAELI RESPONSE BUT HE IMPLIED IT COULD DO SO WITH OUR POINTS IN MIND. I SAID PERHAPS KING HUSSEIN'S ABSENCE ON HONEYMOON IN NEXT TWO WEEKS MIGHT IN ITSELF TEND TO OFFER LOWER GOJ PROFILE DURING COMING PERIOD. SHARAF REPLIED "NOT NECESSARILY" SINCE KING MAY HAVE TO TALK TO PRESS DURING VISIT TO U.K. I SAID I WAS PARTICULARLY HAPPY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES TO HAVE GOTTEN THE TALKING POINTS TO KING HUSSEIN BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM JORDAN AND SHARAF REASSURED ME THAT HE WOULD DO SO.

4. SHARAF SAID GOJ ALSO UNDERSTANDS NEED FOR PATIENCE
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IN THE PEACE PROCESS AND CITED AS PROOF GOJ ROLE IN NUMEIRI-SPONSORED RECENT ARAB CONCILIATION COMMITTEE TALKS IN KHARTOUM. SHARAF SAID GOJ MINISTER OF STATE IBRAHIM HAD HELPED TO GET ACCEPTANCE AT MEETING FOR GIVING SADAT ANOTHER TWO MONTHS TO CONTINUE HIS PEACE EFFORTS. WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC, SHARAF SAID JORDAN HAD ALSO HELPED IN FORMULATION WHICH COULD ALLOW SADAT TO REJOIN ARAB CONSENSUS ON TERMS NOT HUMILIATING TO HIM. SHARAF AFFIRMED THAT JORDAN IS WORKING QUIETLY TO HELP SADAT VIS-A-VIS OTHER ARABS.

5. AT ONE POINT IN CONVERSATION SHARAF ASSERTED THAT WE ALL HAD TO FACE FACT THAT SADAT INITIATIVE DOES APPEAR DEAD. IN REPLY I SAID THAT WHATEVER JORDAN MAY THINK ABOUT CURRENT STATUS OF SADAT INITIATIVE, IMPORTANT POINT WAS THAT WE BE ALLOWED TO PLAY OUT OUR OWN FULL SCENARIO IN PEACE EFFORT. SPEAKING PERSONALLY I CITED SEVERAL POSITIVE STRAWS IN THE WIND.: RECENT AHERTON AND SAUNDERS STATEMENTS AND RATIONALE BEHIND THEM; OUR RECENT PUBLIC MENTION THAT WE DO NOT RULE OUT ADVANCING U.S. IDEAS IF NEEDED FOR NEGOTIATIONS; FORTHCOMING VISIT TO ISRAEL BY VICE PRESIDENT, WHICH ALSO CAN HAVE POSITIVE

IMPACT ON PEACE PROCESS. I ALSO MENTIONED FERMENT IN ISRAEL CURRENTLY SHOWN BY WEIZMAN OPPOSITION TO ISRAELI ANSWERS AND BY HEAVY PRESS CRITICISM OF BEGIN POSITION. IT WAS IMPORTANT NOT TO TAKE POSITIONS WHICH MADE IT LOOK AS THOUGH THE PEACE EFFORT IS FINISHED. SHARAF LISTENED SYMPATHETICALLY, ACKNOWLEDGED THE LOGIC OF THIS PRESENTATION AND SAID AGAIN HE WOULD CONVEY TALKING POINTS TO KING HUSSEIN, WHO WAS ARRIVING AT AIRPORT BY HELICOPTER AS I DEPARTED.

6. LATER IN DAY SHARAF INFORMED ME KING HAD GONE OVER TALKING POINTS JUST BEFORE DEPARTURE WHILE IN AIRCRAFT AND HAD GIVEN SHARAF A VERY QUICK REACTION. KING APPRECIATES OUR VIEWS BUT FEELS THERE IS NO REASON FOR
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OPTIMISM, KNOWING DYNAMICS OF ISRAEL SITUATION. KING SAID HE FINDS ISRAELI (NOT JUST BEGIN) ATTITUDE INTRANSIGENT, ARROGANT AND TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE.

7. KING SAID HE APPRECIATES OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS BUT HE HOPES WE CAN AVOID ERODING OUR CREDIBILITY THE WAY THAT SADAT HAS BEEN LOSING HIS IN THE AREA AND KING HOPES THAT U.S. DOES NOT EXPECT JORDAN AND OTHER MODERATES TO GO DOWN THIS ROAD THE WAY SADAT HAS. SHARAF INTERPRETED KING'S COMMENT TO MEAN THAT SADAT HAS BEEN DEALT A SEVERE BLOW BY ISRAELI RESPONSE TO U.S. QUESTIONS THAT GIVES JORDAN EXTREME CAUSE FOR CONCERN. (I INTERJECTED THAT OUR POLICY IS AIMED PRECISELY AT SUPPORTING THE ARAB MODERATES AND THIS IS A MAJOR REASON WHY WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING THIS MAJOR EFFORT.)

8. SHARAF SAID KING INDICATED THAT JORDAN WILL HAVE TO ACT IN JORDAN'S BEST INTERESTS IN THE ARAB WORLD SO AS NOT TO LOSE CREDIBILITY. SHARAF INTERPRETED THIS TO MEAN THAT JORDAN IS FORCED TO BE EXPLICIT IN CRITICIZING BEGIN POSITION, ALTHOUGH IT CERTAINLY IS NOT GOING TO WAGE A CAMPAIGN ON THIS ISSUE, BUT THAT JORDAN HAS NO RPT NO INTENTION TO CRITICIZE U.S. POLICY. I REPLIED THAT I APPRECIATED JORDANIAN RESTRAINT ON THIS LATTER POINT PARTICULARLY; I FELT THAT BURDEN OF TALKING POINTS WAS THAT IT IS IN OUR INTERESTS TO AVOID AGGRAVATING AN ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT SITUATION TO THE POINT WHERE IT BLOCKED U.S. STRATEGY FROM MOVING FORWARD. SHARAF FULLY ACKNOWLEDGED THIS POINT AND AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH AS REQUIRED DURING THE KING'S ABSENCE (WHOM SHARAF WILL JOIN IN THE U.K. IN ABOUT A WEEK).

9. COMMENT; ON BALANCE, IT WAS PROBABLY USEFUL TO GET
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U.S. VIEWS TO KING PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE AND I THINK (AS DOES SHARAF) THAT WE SHOULD ATTRIBUTE SOME OF THE HARSHNESS OF THE KING'S REACTION TO THE HURRIED NATURE OF THE EXCHANGE JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHARAF RE-AFFIRMED THAT KING HAS BEEN DEEPLY ANGRY FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS IN WAKE OF BEGIN RESPONSE, AND WAS RESTRAINED FROM MAKING PERSONAL PUBLIC REACTION BY HIS ADVISORS. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT KING ESCHEWED PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SUCH A PUBLIC STATEMENT IN HIS PUBLIC ADDRESS YESTERDAY AT UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN GRADUATION. I WOULD LIKE TO HOPE THAT VERY PRIVATE HONEYMOON IN U.K. WILL COOL KING'S TEMPER SOMEWHAT AND ALSO LOWER JORDANIAN MEDIA PROFILE, ALTHOUGH I THINK THERE WILL PROBABLY BE CONTINUING CRITICISM OF ISRAELI ATTITUDES FROM GOJ AND POSSIBLY FROM KING HIMSELF. IN MY JUDGMENT, THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE IF U.S. CONTINUES TO REFRAIN FROM MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENT ITSELF CRITICIZING ISRAELI RESPONSE TO U.S. QUESTIONS.

10. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT CAIRO AND TEL AVIV.
SUDDARTH UNQUOTE VANCE

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